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THE NATIONAL ACADEMY'S EXHIBITION

ON the first page of the catalogue of the National Academy of Design's eighty-sixth annual exhibition, which has just closed, was this note: "The number of works submitted for the present exhibition was 1,284. Of this number 463 were accepted, but owing to lack of space only 371 were placed. Seventy-three are by Academicians, eighty-four are by associates, and two hundred and fourteen are by non-members." This is interesting and significant. In the first place it manifests the need of larger, if not better, exhibition galleries in New York, America's great art center, and second it indicates the inherent difference between this exhibition and others with which it is brought into comparison. The Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts recently issued a statement showing that about one-half of the paintings included in its last annual exhibition were specially invited from the artists or from other exhibitions; the Corcoran Gallery of Art is known to have pursued the same method to insure a high standard in its biennial exhibition. To have done so does not lay these institutions open to criticism, for it is appreciated that they hold themselves directly responsible to the public. The National Academy of Design is, on the other hand, not a public institution but an association of artists. Its exhibitions are given for the benefit of its members and others of the profession with the purpose of affording opportunity for display. According to its constitution members are given special privileges which, though logical and just, must tend to imperil enforcement of standard. Yet despite all this the Academy exhibitions do stand for the best in contemporary art. Of course from time to time murmurings arise; if it were not so there might be no progress; it was murmurings which led to the formation of the "Society of American Artists"; it is through conflict of opinion that the predisposition to fall into ruts is minimized.

Certainly the jury of selection of the eighty-sixth annual exhibition could not be accused of lack of catholicity. Far less than in a selected exhibition was evidence shown of a governing taste. The tonalists, the impressionists, the most daring of the innovators, so long as he kept within fair bounds, was given equal place. Some complained that too many pictures were shown, and it is true that overcrowding militated against effect, but the general impression made upon entrance was not displeasing. There were less large canvases than usual this year, less works which detached themselves conspicuously from all the others. But, on the other hand, the general average was uncommonly high and an amazingly large number of the exhibits possessed rare qualities.

The Thomas B. Clarke prize was awarded to a painting by Charles W. Hawthorne, entitled "The Trousseau," which had not been previously shown, but was purchased for the Metropolitan Museum before the exhibition opened. It is, as will be seen by the accompanying illustration, a homely picture, but it reflects life, it touches a common sentiment rooted in the mysterious depths of universality, it is something more than a well-painted picture. The Hallgarten prizes were given respectively to Lillian Genth for a sylvan scene, a bit of sunbedabbled woodland invaded by a nymph, entitled "Depths of the Woods"; to Joseph T. Pearson, Jr., for a handsome group of white geese; and to Leslie P. Thompson for a figure painting, two girls at a tea table, admirably rendered. The Inness gold medal went to W. Elmer Schofield for a winter landscape, "February Morning," showing a commonplace little town lying steeped in winter sunshine—"an open window." John C. Johansen received the Saltus Medal for Merit for a large decorative painting which pictured a garden party, groups of graceful women in pleasant conversation—a picture of no great sig-



THE TROUSSEAU

CHARLES W. HAWTHORNE

AWARDED THE THOMAS B. CLARKE PRIZE

nificance beyond its charm of color and line. The Julia A. Shaw memorial prize was won by "The Geography Lesson," a picture painted, much in the spirit of the modern Dutch interiors, by Mary van der Veer of Amsterdam, New York.

Aside from such distinctions, interest in this exhibition was remarkably evenly divided, and only by use of broad definitions could the exhibits be classified. Mrs. Kenyon Cox sent a portrait of her three children; two lads almost beyond boyhood, and a younger daughter—an interesting group; A. Brewster Sewell contributed an excellent and most attractive portrait study of a young woman; but with these exceptions, and

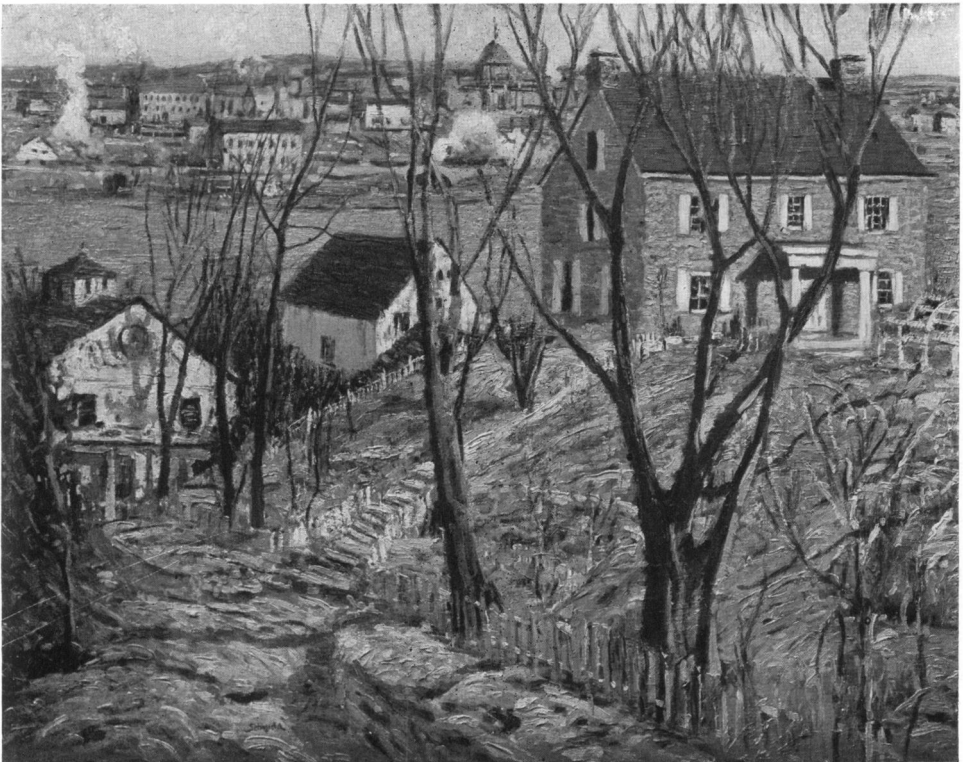
a few others, it was the portraits of men which attracted most attention in this exhibition—Robert MacCameron's portrait of Rodin, Orlando Rouland's portrait of John Burroughs, Ralph Clarkson's portrait of E. G. Keith, Esq., Samuel Burtis Baker's portrait of E. L. Major, Charles Noel Flagg's portrait of General Edward Harland, and Irving Wiles's portrait of a former mayor of New York. George de Forest Brush sent a charming small portrait of a little girl, "Betty Holter," painted with the simplicity and affection of the Italian primitives; Henry Hubbell sent his portrait of "Winthrop," son of Mr. and Mrs. Templeton Johnson, rendered after the

manner of the great English portraiturists; and William Sergeant Kendall sent not only his portrait of the two children of Ezra Ripley Thayer, Esq., but a picture of a baby curiously examining a plaster cast of an infant's head; all of which were peculiarly attractive.

Among meritorious landscapes many might be mentioned, but space will only permit of reference to a few manifesting varying tendencies. "Peaceful Evening" by F. de Haven, "A Group of Birches" by Frederick J. Mulhaupt, "Autumn Oaks" by Frank A. Bicknell, all had primarily tonal and decorative quality; Birge Harrison's three landscapes, and Charles Warren Eaton's two, possessed subtlety and sentiment—in them nature was interpreted in terms of art; in Ernest Lawson's virile "Road Down the Palisades," Cullen Yates's "The Old Quarry," and Charles Morris

Young's "May" the transcription of light and air were given chief consideration. George Bellow's "Snow-Capped River" and "New York" represented the effort to cast off traditions and find a new and presumably simpler mode of expression—an effort which up to the present time has been futile.

Good snow pictures are now taken almost as a matter of course, but there were some specially good ones in this exhibition—works by Gardner Symons, John F. Carlson, Henry B. Selden, Walter Palmer, Leonard Ochtman and others. Guy C. Wiggins sent two excellent city pictures, Carleton C. Chapman a picture of a steamer in mid-ocean which was uncommonly expressive of motion and vastly spacious in suggestion; Frederick J. Waugh was represented by a powerful marine, the surf off Cape Ann, which was prominently placed.



FEBRUARY MORNING

W. ELMER SCHOFIELD

AWARDED THE INNESS GOLD MEDAL